

Organized delivery of 4800 ears of Iowa sweet corn

Washington, DC – Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) visited the men and women of Iowa's National Guard at Camp Shelby in Mississippi today as they train for the largest deployment since World War II. With the assistance of Iowa farmers, businesses and veterans groups, Braley was able to organize the delivery of 4800 ears of Iowa sweet corn to thank the troops for the sacrifice and give them a taste of home.

"The men and women of Iowa's National Guard, as well as their families, have made unbelievable sacrifices for our country," Braley said. "I wanted to personally thank all of them as they train for the largest deployment since World War II and bringing a little taste of Iowa with me was the least I could do. When I decided to see if we could make this possible, the support and generosity from Iowans was overwhelming. This was a great opportunity for public and private interests to come together and thank Iowa's troops for the sacrifices they make and the work they do to keep us safe."

"This project shows the power of farmers working together and what they can accomplish to help a friend, a neighbor, a cause they believe in," said Craig Lang, Iowa Farm Bureau President. "We wish our troops well and are proud to provide them this 'flavor' of Iowa as a token of our gratitude for their hard work and difficult duties that they face."

Braley organized the project, informally dubbed "Operation Sweet Corn," after visiting Iraq with Rep. Gene Taylor (D-Miss.) in 2009. During that trip, Taylor arranged for thousands of pounds of gumbo and Gulf shrimp to be delivered to troops overseas as part of "Operation Gumbo Drop."

The following individuals and organizations generously donated resources to help organize the project, provide the corn and watermelon, as well as to cover associated costs:

- Iowa Farm Bureau
- John Chidester
- Ray and Michelle Christenson, Grimes Sweet Corn
- Fred Greiner, Fareway Foods
- Mike Penick
- Greg and Polly Rinehart
- Mark and Cindy Westrum, Westrum Produce
- Capitol City Fruit in Des Moines
- Rock Island Arsenal Chapter of the Association of the US Army
- Dubuque American Legion Post 6
- Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 776 in the Quad Cities
- Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter in Cherokee, Iowa
- American Legion Post 26 in Davenport, Iowa
- Private contributions from individuals in Eastern Iowa